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IN THIS ISSUE:

	Page
NEWS RELEASES-	
0178 Forest Service Timber Program Profitable In 1992	1
0179 Espy Appoints Mississippi FMHA, ASCS Directors	1
0180 USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Rice Prices	2
0181 Mexico Eligible For More Sunflowerseed Oil Under SOAP	2
0182 Allergen-Free Rubber Might Open New Market For Desert Shrub	3
0183 USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Price And User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate For Upland Cotton	4
0184 Cotton Marketing Advisory Committee To Meet March 31	5
0185 U.S. To Donate Agricultural Commodities To Belarus	6
0186 Geographic Information Systems Conference To Meet March 14-19	6
0187 U.S. To Donate Wheat And Rice To The Russian Federation	7

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

News Releases-

Release No. 0178.93
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FOREST SERVICE TIMBER PROGRAM PROFITABLE IN 1992

WASHINGTON, March 8--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today reported revenues from timber sales on national forests exceeded costs by \$255 million in fiscal year 1992, based on \$1.077 billion in gross revenues.

"The revenues were generated from the harvest of 7.3 billion board feet (BBF) of timber, down from 8.5 BBF the previous year," said Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson. (A board foot is a unit of measure equal to a piece of lumber 1 foot square by 1 inch thick.)

The figures were released in the 1992 Timber Sale Program Annual Report, compiled through the agency's Timber Sale Program Information Reporting System (TSPIRS).

The Forest Service made revenue sharing payments of \$305.5 million to states and counties last year for use by local school systems and highway departments.

In fiscal year 1992, 72 percent of the total timber harvest from the national forests came from forests where revenues exceeded expenditures. On the remaining 28 percent, expenses exceeded revenues by \$65.7 million.

Agency officials estimate the long-term economic value of the FY 1992 harvest at \$758 million. In recent years the harvest of National Forest timber has provided the raw material for about 25 percent of the softwood lumber and plywood produced in the United States.



Release No. 0179.93
 Joel Berg (202) 720-4623

ESPY APPOINTS MISSISSIPPI FmHA, ASCS DIRECTORS

JACKSON, Miss., March 8--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced appointments of Mississippi state directors for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

George Irvin, 43, of Jackson, a rural housing specialist for 16 years at FmHA, was named state director of FmHA. Norris Faust, 41, of Sledge, a farmer and Quitman County supervisor, was named state director of ASCS.

"I am pleased to announce the appointments of two Mississippians who will make sure the FmHA and the ASCS are farmer-friendly and responsive to the needs of all Mississippians," said Espy. "George and Norris will be cutting red tape and making sure taxpayers' money is spent to serve communities and not preserve bureaucracy."

Irvin has served in FmHA since 1977. He started as an assistant county supervisor in Pearl River County and moved up to county supervisor in Madison County. He has been a rural housing specialist since 1984. Prior to joining FmHA, he taught agriculture in the Western Line Consolidated School District. He is a major in the Mississippi National Guard. He also serves on the Mississippi Governor's Housing Task Force.

Irvin holds a master's degree in business administration from Jackson State University, a master's in agriculture and extension education/administration from Mississippi State University, and a bachelor's of science degree from Alcorn State University. He lives in Jackson with his wife, Jean, and their three children.

FmHA makes or guarantees farm ownership and operating loans to farmers who cannot obtain credit from banks or other lending institutions; makes and guarantees loans for single-family housing

in rural areas; and makes loans for multi-family housing projects in rural areas. In Mississippi, the FmHA has about 500 employees and a \$3.5 billion loan portfolio.

New Mississippi ASCS director Faust is a life-time farmer who has been a county supervisor for Quitman County since 1984. Prior to his election to supervisor, Faust was a Sledge city alderman from 1980 till 1982. In 1973, he taught at Quitman County High School. He lives in Sledge with his wife, Eloise, and their two children.

Faust received a bachelor's of science degree in education from Delta State University.

ASCS administers commodity production adjustment and price-support programs; conservation cost-sharing with farmers and ranchers; the Conservation Reserve Program; natural disaster assistance to agricultural producers through payments and cost-sharing; and certain national emergency preparedness activities. ASCS finances commodity programs through the Commodity Credit Corporation, a government entity for which ASCS provides operating personnel. In Mississippi, the ASCS has more than 500 employees and operates with a \$12 million budget.



Release No. 0180.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, March 9--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.07 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.18 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.15 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.04 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, loan deficiency payment rates and gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price level are:

- for long grain, \$1.68 per hundredweight;
- for medium grain, \$1.61 per hundredweight;
- for short grain, \$1.62 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made March 16 at 3 p.m. EST.



Release No. 0181.93

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MEXICO ELIGIBLE FOR MORE SUNFLOWERSEED OIL UNDER SOAP

WASHINGTON, March 9--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Charles J. O'Mara today announced an opportunity for additional sales of 20,000 metric tons of U.S. sunflowerseed oil to Mexico under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Sunflowerseed Oil Assistance Program.

Sales of sunflowerseed oil will be made through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. Sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA.

The allocation will be valid until Sept. 30. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Randy Baxter, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



Release No. 0182.93
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ALLERGEN-FREE RUBBER MIGHT OPEN NEW MARKET FOR DESERT SHRUB

WASHINGTON, March 11--Prickly rashes and other allergic reactions to latex gloves might be avoided by using rubber from a desert shrub, guayule (pronounced why-YOU-lee), according to U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists and medical researchers.

"Guayule's natural rubber appears to be free of the allergy-causing proteins found in latex made from the tropical rubber tree. That could help make this wild desert shrub a new, high-value crop for farmers in the southwest," said Katrina Cornish of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Allergen-free rubber extracted from guayule stems and bark could be used to make gloves for medical and lab professionals, as well as other latex products, such as toys and elastic used in clothing. The AIDS epidemic, she said, has boosted the use of latex gloves and condoms.

About 65 volunteers with latex allergies had no adverse reaction to guayule rubber in three preliminary tests conducted by medical researchers in collaboration with Cornish, a plant physiologist. As many as a half-million Americans may be allergic to latex, with symptoms ranging from minor skin rash to a rare, life-threatening shock.

Cornish said lab studies of rubber proteins were done at the agency's Western Regional Research Center in Albany, Calif. She and ARS colleagues Deborah J. Siler and Ok-Koo K. Grosjean found that guayule rubber had fewer than ten potentially allergenic proteins, while purified latex from the tropical rubber tree contained hundreds of these proteins.

"Rubber tree latex can be purified to remove most of its allergens, but this might not protect severely allergic people," said Cornish.

ARS researchers in Arizona are pinpointing superior guayule plants in efforts to boost the shrub's potential as a domestic source of natural rubber. It's not now grown as a commercial crop because latex tapped from the tropical rubber tree is cheaper to produce, Cornish said.

The medical experiments were conducted at Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation, La Jolla, Calif., Woodland Clinic Medical Group, Woodland, Calif. and Rhode Island Hospital, Providence. Volunteers with latex allergies were given standard allergy tests using a tiny amount of rubber from the guayule shrub. None showed an allergic response, and experiments are being repeated with other patients, Cornish said.

"As many as a half-million Americans may be allergic to proteins in rubber from the tropical rubber tree," said Robert G. Hamilton, Ph.D., of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore. Hamilton, an associate professor of medicine, is director of the school's Dermatology, Allergy and Clinical Immunology Reference laboratory.

"Individuals most likely to develop this allergy include health care professionals who wear rubber gloves every day at work, and patients who undergo multiple surgeries, such as children with spina bifida," a congenital disorder of the spine.

Allergic reactions range from an itchy, burning rash to anaphylactic shock, said Ronald A. Simon, M.D., who heads the division of allergy and immunology at the Scripps Clinic. During anaphylactic shock, the heart may stop beating and tissues may swell, including those in the throat. That could block breathing, said Dr. Simon.

Guayule, known to scientists as *Parthenium argentatum*, grows wild in Arizona and Mexico. Southeast Asia's plantations of the tropical rubber tree, *Hevea brasiliensis*, are the world's foremost source of premium natural rubber. The U.S. annually imports about 1 million tons of natural rubber worth about \$1 billion for making gloves, auto and airplane tires and many other goods.



Release No. 0183.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Mar. 11--Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, Mar. 18. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Mar. 12, through midnight Thursday, Mar. 18.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 92 percent of the 1992 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 4.05 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I. Calculated AWP	48.03 cents per pound
1992 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	92
II. USNE Price	65.25 cents per pound
NE Price	<u>-61.71</u> cents per pound
Maximum Adjustment Allowed	3.54 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	61.71
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.55
Average U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	<u>- 13.68</u>
Calculated AWP	48.03
Further AWP adjustment	<u>- 0</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	48.03 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	61.71
NE Coarse Count Price	<u>- 57.27</u>
	4.44
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>- 3.95</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT.....	0.49 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991 and 1992 base quality loan rates of 50.77 and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1992-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1992 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain a loan deficiency payment on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1992 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 2.29 cents per pound. This rate is applicable for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to September 30, 1993. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate are summarized below:

Week	For the		User		
	Friday through		USNE Price	NE Price	Minus NE cents per pound
	Thursday	Period Ending			
1	Feb. 18, 1993	65.95	60.94	5.01	3.76
2	Feb. 25, 1993	65.85	61.80	4.05	2.80
3	Mar. 4, 1993	65.30	61.62	3.68	2.43
4	Mar. 11, 1993	65.25	61.71	3.54	2.29

1/ USNE price minus NE price minus 1.25 cents.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, Mar. 18.



Release No. 0184.93
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COTTON MARKETING ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO MEET MARCH 31

WASHINGTON, March 12--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that the National Advisory Committee on Cotton Marketing will meet March 31 at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport, Hyatt-Regency Hotel, West Building, at 8:00 a.m.

The committee addresses issues and makes recommendations that impact on commodity programs of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and Agricultural Marketing Service.

Randy Weber, ASCS acting administrator, said the purpose of the meeting is to make recommendations for a schedule of premiums and discounts for the Commodity Credit Corporation's upland cotton price support loan program to accommodate USDA's new cotton classification procedure.

The new procedure, effective with the 1993 crop, requires separate quality determinations for color and leaf. The committee will also review progress in implementing previous committee recommendations and consider other steps to improve the efficiency of the U.S. cotton marketing system.

The advisory committee was first established by the secretary of agriculture in 1988.

For additional information contact: Wayne Bjorlie, Director, Fibers and Rice Analysis Division, ASCS/USDA, 3760-S, P.O. Box 2415, Washington, D.C. 20013-2415.



Release No. 0185.93
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U.S. TO DONATE AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO BELARUS

WASHINGTON, March 12--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced the United States will donate about 212,000 metric tons of U.S. agricultural commodities for distribution in Belarus.

"These donations show our continued support for the citizens of the Belarus republic, many of whom were victims of the Chernobyl disaster," said Espy. "In addition, the United States supports the Belarus government in its efforts to expand the role of the private sector, especially in agriculture."

The donation includes 200,000 tons of corn valued at \$19 million, which will be provided under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Progress Program. Belarus will pay for all ocean transportation, inland transportation, handling, storage and distribution costs within the republic.

The corn will be sold and proceeds used in programs to privatize the ownership of land, state-owned enterprises and collective farm assets.

A separate donation of 12,205 tons of U.S. agricultural commodities will be made to CitiHope International, a private U.S. voluntary organization, for distribution to needy people in Belarus.

This donation includes 4,000 tons of U.S. butter, 1,880 tons of rice, 1,250 tons of wheat flour, 1,250 tons of whole dry milk, 900 tons of beans, 625 tons of evaporated milk, 625 tons of baby formula, 600 tons of vegetable oil, 625 tons of baby fruit and vegetable food, and 450 tons of dry rice baby cereal.

This \$23.8 million donation includes \$19.9 million in commodities and \$3.9 million in freight costs. USDA will pay for ocean and inland transportation of the commodities to distribution sites.

About half of these commodities will be distributed free of charge to hospitals, orphanages, schools, and homes for the elderly and the handicapped. CitiHope International will sell the remainder of the products through retail food outlets and proceeds from the sales will be used for providing medical and other humanitarian assistance in the Chernobyl Crescent area.

The butter will be provided under Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949. The other commodities will be provided under USDA's Food for Progress program.

The corn will be purchased on behalf of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation on an open tender basis by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service's Kansas City Commodity Office.

The supply period for these donations is U.S. fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, (202) 720-5263.



Release No. 0186.93
Diana Morse (202) 720-4772

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONFERENCE TO MEET MARCH 14-19

WASHINGTON, March 12--The latest geographic information system (GIS) technology, including uses in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's field offices, will be discussed and demonstrated at the 8th annual GRASS GIS users' conference and exhibition March 14-19 at the Hyatt Regency, 1800 President St., Reston, Va.

The joint federal and industry conference--co-hosted by USDA's Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey and the Federal Bureau of Investigation--focuses on efficiency in government through coordinated use of information technology.

Members of the media are welcome. For more information, contact Diana Morse at (202) 720-4772.



Release No. 0187.93

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U.S. TO DONATE WHEAT AND RICE TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

WASHINGTON, March 12--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced the United States will donate 520,000 metric tons of wheat and 87,000 metric tons of rice to the Russian Federation under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food for Progress Program.

"This agreement reaffirms the United States' support for the democratic reforms that are taking place in Russia today," said Espy. "It also illustrates our intent to maintain a presence for U.S. agriculture in this important market."

The \$102 million donation will be distributed or sold by the Russian government to help develop agricultural and economic reforms within the Russian Federation.

The United States will pay all transportation costs to deliver the commodities to Russian ports. Russia will pay for all inland transportation, handling, storage and distribution costs within the country.

Under the Food for Progress Program, USDA provides commodities to needy countries to encourage agricultural and economic reforms. Under the terms of this agreement, Russia has agreed to carry out a number of measures to expand the role of the private sector and improve food supplies.

The wheat and rice will be purchased on behalf of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation on an open tender basis by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service's Kansas City commodity office. The supply period is fiscal 1993.

For more information, contact James F. Keefer, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, at (202) 720-9263.



